A/66/21

United Nations

# Report of the Committee on Information

## Thirty-third session (27 April-6 May 2011)

**General Assembly**
**Official Records**
**Sixty-sixth Session**
**Supplement No. 21**

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**Thirty-third session**
**(27 April-6 May 2011)**

United Nations • New York, 2011

*Note*

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

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# Chapter I
# Introduction

1. In its resolution 34/182, the General Assembly decided to maintain the Committee to Review United Nations Public Information Policies and Activities, established by its resolution 33/115 C, to henceforth be known as the Committee on Information, and to increase the membership of the Committee from 41 to 66. In the same resolution, the Assembly requested the Committee:

(a) To continue to examine United Nations public information policies and activities, in the light of the evolution of international relations, particularly during the past two decades, and of the imperatives of the establishment of the new international economic order and of a new world information and communication order;

(b) To evaluate and follow up the efforts made and the progress achieved by the United Nations system in the field of information and communications;

(c) To promote the establishment of a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order intended to strengthen peace and international understanding and based on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information and to make recommendations thereon to the General Assembly.

The Assembly requested the Committee and the Secretary-General to report to it at its thirty-fifth session.

2. The General Assembly, from its thirty-sixth to sixty-fourth sessions, took note of the reports of the Committee and adopted consensus resolutions. At its sixty-fifth session, the Assembly took note of the report of the Committee and adopted consensus resolutions 65/107 A and B.

3. The Committee is currently composed of the following Member States:

| | |
|---|---|
| Algeria | Brazil |
| Angola | Bulgaria |
| Antigua and Barbuda | Burkina Faso |
| Argentina | Burundi |
| Armenia | Cape Verde |
| Austria | Chile |
| Azerbaijan | China |
| Bangladesh | Colombia |
| Belarus | Congo |
| Belgium | Costa Rica |
| Belize | Côte d'Ivoire |
| Benin | Croatia |

Cuba
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Denmark
Dominican Republic
Ecuador
Egypt
El Salvador
Ethiopia
Finland
France
Gabon
Georgia
Germany
Ghana
Greece
Guatemala
Guinea
Guyana
Hungary
Iceland
India
Indonesia
Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Ireland
Israel
Italy
Jamaica
Japan
Jordan
Kazakhstan
Kenya
Lebanon
Liberia
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
Luxembourg
Madagascar
Malta
Mexico
Monaco
Mongolia
Morocco
Mozambique
Nepal
Netherlands
Niger
Nigeria
Pakistan
Peru
Philippines
Poland
Portugal
Qatar
Republic of Korea
Republic of Moldova
Romania
Russian Federation
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Saudi Arabia
Senegal
Sierra Leone
Singapore
Slovakia
Solomon Islands
Somalia
South Africa
Spain
Sri Lanka
Sudan
Suriname
Switzerland
Syrian Arab Republic
Thailand
Togo
Trinidad and Tobago
Tunisia
Turkey
Ukraine
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
United Republic of Tanzania
United States of America
Uruguay
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
Viet Nam
Yemen
Zambia
Zimbabwe

# Chapter II
# Organizational questions

## A. Opening of the session

4. The organizational meeting of the thirty-third session of the Committee on Information was held on 27 April 2011 at United Nations Headquarters. The session was opened by the incumbent Chair of the Committee, Antonio Pedro Monteiro Lima (Cape Verde).

## B. Election of officers

5. In accordance with the principle of geographical rotation, the Committee held elections during its session for members of a new Bureau, to serve for a two-year term. Upon his nomination by the representative of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, Eduardo Ulibarri (Costa Rica) was elected Chair by acclamation. Upon their nomination by the representatives of the Group of African States, the Group of Eastern European States and the Group of Western European and Other States, respectively, Moses Sayela Walubita (Zambia), Gheorghe Leucă (Republic of Moldova) and Stéphane Crouzat (France) were elected Vice-Chairs by acclamation. Upon his nomination by the representative of the Group of Asian States, Mohammad Reza Sahraei (Islamic Republic of Iran) was elected Rapporteur, also by acclamation. The officers of the Committee on Information for the period 2011-2012 are as follows:

*Chair*:
Eduardo Ulibarri (Costa Rica)

*Vice-Chairs*:
Stéphane Crouzat (France)
Gheorghe Leucă (Republic of Moldova)
Moses Sayela Walubita (Zambia)

*Rapporteur*:
Mohammad Reza Sahraei (Islamic Republic of Iran)

## C. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work

6. At its organizational meeting, on 27 April, the Committee adopted the following agenda and programme of work (A/AC.198/2011/1):

1. Opening of the session.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work.
4. Statement by the Chair.
5. Admission of new members.
6. Statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information.

7. General debate.

8. Consideration of reports submitted by the Secretary-General.

9. Open-ended working group of the Committee on Information.

10. Consideration and adoption of the report of the Committee to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session.

7. The Committee held its general debate on 27 and 28 April 2011. On 27 April, in the afternoon, the Department of Public Information, led by its Under-Secretary-General, held an interactive dialogue with Member States.

8. For its consideration of agenda item 7, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information: strategic communications services (A/AC.198/2011/2);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information: news services (A/AC.198/2011/3);

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information: outreach services (A/AC.198/2011/4).

## D. Observers

9. The following Member States took part in the session as observers: Barbados, Central African Republic, Liechtenstein, Lithuania and Nicaragua. The Holy See and Palestine also participated in the session as observers.

# Chapter III
## General debate

10. Statements in the general debate were made by the following States members of the Committee on Information: Argentina (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China), Hungary (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the European Union), Chile (on behalf of the Rio Group), Belarus, Indonesia, Pakistan, China, Cuba, Brazil, Peru, India, Costa Rica, Islamic Republic of Iran, Algeria, Senegal, Syrian Arab Republic, Egypt, Russian Federation, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Mexico, Japan, Israel, Zambia, Bangladesh, United Republic of Tanzania and United States of America. Palestine, in its capacity as observer, also made a statement. The general debate was preceded by statements by the Chair of the Committee and by the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information.

11. In taking up the substantive questions before the Committee, speakers emphasized the important role of the Department of Public Information in communicating the work of the United Nations to a broad and diverse global audience. The topics discussed included the importance of building effective partnerships and the use of social media tools to communicate messages, especially to youthful audiences.

12. One speaker, addressing the Committee on behalf of a group, encouraged the Department to reach out to the widest possible audience and project the accomplishments of the Organization worldwide. Another speaker, also speaking on behalf of a group, echoed those remarks and encouraged the Department to continue to utilize traditional media, such as radio, television and print, while also embracing different kinds of new media platforms. Yet another speaker expressed the hope of the group on whose behalf he was speaking that the resolution resulting from the discussions would reflect the Department's support for the Organization's core priorities of promoting peace and security, development and human rights.

13. Several speakers called for the United Nations to intervene more vigorously in bridging the digital divide. While applauding the creative use of modern technology, they stressed their concern about the fact that some in the developing world lacked access to new information technology and, therefore, to a portion of the flow of information. United Nations Radio was cited as an excellent communications tool for reaching audiences, including in remote regions of the world.

14. Speakers had varied views about the Department's increasing use of social media tools. One speaker expressed concern about the lack of edited content on social media sites, while others noted that information shared through social media was predominantly in English. Other speakers praised the Department's innovative approach to social media and referred to its particular ability to reach young audiences.

15. A number of speakers discussed the importance of achieving linguistic parity in the work of the Department of Public Information. Advocating the further strengthening of multilingualism, some speakers noted that the Department should work to close the gap between the number of web pages offered in English and in other languages, while bearing in mind that content is often provided from departments other than the Department of Public Information. Another speaker,

reflecting the view of a group of Member States, noted that more resources should be allocated to achieving full parity among the official languages of the United Nations. Some speakers questioned the dominance of English and French over the other official languages in the various outputs of the Department.

16. Several speakers lauded the Department of Public Information's continued cooperation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support. One speaker encouraged such cooperation, saying that it was important for Member States and the public to receive up-to-date information on United Nations peacekeeping. A few speakers urged the Department of Public Information to work to convey the constraints and challenges faced by peacekeepers, while others encouraged the Department to place emphasis in its information materials on the responsibility of peacekeepers to protect children, women and civilians.

17. A number of speakers also commented on the Department's special information programme on the question of Palestine, which reflected the Department's commitment to contributing to an environment that supported dialogue and the peace process. The annual training programme for Palestinian media professionals, designed to assist them in developing their media capacity and skills, was praised, as was the annual international media seminar. In the context of journalist programmes, one speaker mentioned the Reham al-Farra fellowships, citing the need for journalists from his region to receive more opportunities to become more familiar with the work of the United Nations.

18. The importance of intercultural and interreligious dialogue was stressed by a number of speakers. Noting the Department's efforts to disseminate information in support of such dialogue and to promote mutual respect, including through the "Unlearning intolerance" seminar series, speakers praised the Department's outreach efforts. Along the same lines, a number of speakers praised the United Nations Academic Impact initiative, launched in November 2010 to serve as a means for universities and other institutions of research and higher learning to contribute to the Organization's programmes and thinking in critical areas.

19. Several speakers commented on the outreach programmes of the Department of Public Information and lauded the work of the Department with students and young people. Speakers expressed support for the further strengthening of innovative partnerships, such as cooperation with civil society and other groups, such as academia and the creative arts community. Some speakers praised the Department's outreach programme on international events, for example in remembrance of the victims of the slave trade and the International Day of Nowruz, and the outreach programme on the Holocaust. The global model United Nations conference was cited by one speaker as an effective educational tool for young people. Another speaker referred to the "UN4U" programme as a popular means of reaching young audiences in many countries.

20. The work and activities of the network of United Nations information centres were commented on by a number of speakers, who described them as "an invaluable link to the public", "a vital source", "crucial in enhancing the public image of the Organization" and "essential" in conveying information about the United Nations in numerous local languages. One speaker, addressing the Committee on behalf of a group, urged for all possible measures to be taken to strengthen United Nations information centres, which served a particularly important role in developing

countries as essential sources of communication and information. Other speakers addressed the issue of resource constraints and the need for the centres to form creative partnerships with civil society in order to do more with less. With regard to the need to provide more training for staff, particularly those from the information centres, one speaker commented on the importance of finalizing arrangements for the centre in Luanda so that Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa could have access to such training.

21. Several speakers lauded the Department for the positive role it had played in the aftermath of natural disasters and calamities. The Department had used creative and innovative means of communication to disseminate information to populations in need in affected areas, as well as to potential donors so as to elicit a global, popular response.

22. In connection with the observance of World Press Freedom Day, several speakers referred to the importance of freedom of expression and freedom of the press. One person, speaking on behalf of a group, underlined the importance of World Press Freedom Day in raising the awareness of Governments regarding the duty to uphold the right to freedom of expression. Another speaker pointed out that marking the Day was important for the observance of basic principles of human rights.

23. During the general debate, members of the Committee shared views with and posed questions to the senior managers of the Department, and the new website of the Department was launched.

24. The Committee took note with appreciation of the contribution of the Group of 77 and China to streamline the resolution of the Committee on Information and of the views expressed by a group of Member States on the need to further streamline the resolution on questions relating to information. The Committee requested the Bureau to organize informal consultations of the Committee in order to further streamline the resolution through an exchange of views and to produce, as appropriate, a revised text at least two weeks before the opening of the thirty-fourth session of the Committee.

# Chapter IV

## Consideration and adoption of the report of the Committee to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session

25. At its 4th plenary meeting, the Committee on Information proceeded to adopt its draft report, including two draft resolutions and a draft decision, by consensus. A text, submitted by the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, formed the basis of negotiations for a draft resolution, which involved two negotiating groups, the Group of 77 and China and the European Union, as well as other Member States.

### Questions relating to information

### Draft resolution A
### Information in the service of humanity

*The General Assembly*,

*Taking note* of the comprehensive and important report of the Committee on Information,[1]

*Taking note also* of the report of the Secretary-General on questions relating to information,[2]

*Urges* all countries, organizations of the United Nations system as a whole and all others concerned, reaffirming their commitment to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and to the principles of freedom of the press and freedom of information, as well as to those of the independence, pluralism and diversity of the media, deeply concerned by the disparities existing between developed and developing countries and the consequences of every kind arising from those disparities that affect the capability of the public, private or other media and individuals in developing countries to disseminate information and communicate their views and their cultural and ethical values through endogenous cultural production, as well as to ensure the diversity of sources and their free access to information, and recognizing the call in this context for what in the United Nations and at various international forums has been termed "a new world information and communication order, seen as an evolving and continuous process":

(a) To cooperate and interact with a view to reducing existing disparities in information flows at all levels by increasing assistance for the development of communications infrastructures and capabilities in developing countries, with due regard for their needs and the priorities attached to such areas by those countries, and in order to enable them and the public, private or other media in developing countries to develop their own information and communications policies freely and independently and increase the participation of media and individuals in the communication process, and to ensure a free flow of information at all levels;

(b) To ensure for journalists the free and effective performance of their professional tasks and condemn resolutely all attacks against them;

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[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 21* (A/66/21).

[2] A/66/__.

(c) To provide support for the continuation and strengthening of practical training programmes for broadcasters and journalists from public, private and other media in developing countries;

(d) To enhance regional efforts and cooperation among developing countries, as well as cooperation between developed and developing countries, to strengthen communications capacities and to improve the media infrastructure and communications technology in the developing countries, especially in the areas of training and dissemination of information;

(e) To aim at, in addition to bilateral cooperation, providing all possible support and assistance to the developing countries and their media, public, private or other, with due regard to their interests and needs in the field of information and to action already adopted within the United Nations system, including:

(i) The development of the human and technical resources that are indispensable for the improvement of information and communications systems in developing countries and support for the continuation and strengthening of practical training programmes, such as those already operating under both public and private auspices throughout the developing world;

(ii) The creation of conditions that will enable developing countries and their media, public, private or other, to have, by using their national and regional resources, the communications technology suited to their national needs, as well as the necessary programme material, especially for radio and television broadcasting;

(iii) Assistance in establishing and promoting telecommunication links at the subregional, regional and interregional levels, especially among developing countries;

(iv) The facilitation, as appropriate, of access by the developing countries to advanced communications technology available on the open market;

(f) To provide full support for the International Programme for the Development of Communication of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,[3] which should support both public and private media.

## Draft resolution B
## United Nations public information policies and activities

*The General Assembly*,

*Emphasizing* that the Committee on Information is its main subsidiary body mandated to make recommendations to it relating to the work of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat,

*Reaffirming* its resolution 13 (I) of 13 February 1946, in which it established the Department of Public Information, with a view to promoting to the greatest

[3] See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Records of the General Conference, Twenty-first Session, Belgrade, 23 September-28 October 1980*, vol. 1, *Resolutions*, sect. III.4, resolution 4/21.

possible extent an informed understanding of the work and purposes of the United Nations among the peoples of the world, and all other relevant resolutions of the General Assembly related to the activities of the Department,

*Emphasizing* that the contents of public information and communications should be placed at the heart of the strategic management of the United Nations and that a culture of communications and transparency should permeate all levels of the Organization as a means of fully informing the peoples of the world of the aims and activities of the United Nations, in accordance with the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, in order to create broad-based global support for the United Nations,

*Stressing* that the primary mission of the Department of Public Information is to provide, through its outreach activities, accurate, impartial, comprehensive, balanced, timely and relevant information to the public on the tasks and responsibilities of the United Nations in order to strengthen international support for the activities of the Organization with the greatest transparency,

*Recalling* its resolution 65/107 B of 10 December 2010, which provided an opportunity to take due steps to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department and to maximize the use of its resources,

*Expressing its concern* that the gap in information and communications technology between the developed and the developing countries has continued to widen and that vast segments of the population in developing countries are not benefiting from the information and communications technologies that are currently available, and, in this regard, underlining the necessity of rectifying the imbalances in the present development of information and communications technologies in order to make it more just, equitable and effective,

*Recognizing* that developments in information and communications technologies open vast new opportunities for economic growth and social development and can play an important role in the eradication of poverty in developing countries, and, at the same time, emphasizing that the development of these technologies poses challenges and risks and could lead to the further widening of disparities between and within countries,

*Recalling* its resolution 63/306 of 9 September 2009, on multilingualism, and emphasizing the importance of making use, to the fullest extent possible, of the official languages of the United Nations in the activities of the Department of Public Information, with the aim of eliminating the disparity between the use of English and the five other official languages,

## I
## Introduction

1. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in respect of the public information policies and activities of the United Nations, to continue to implement fully the recommendations contained in relevant resolutions;

2. *Reaffirms* that the United Nations remains the indispensable foundation of a peaceful and just world and that its voice must be heard in a clear and effective manner, and emphasizes the essential role of the Department of Public Information in this context;

3. *Stresses* the importance of the provision of clear, timely, accurate and comprehensive information by the Secretariat to Member States, upon their request, within the framework of existing mandates and procedures;

4. *Reaffirms* the central role of the Committee on Information in United Nations public information policies and activities, including the prioritization of those activities, and decides that recommendations relating to the programme of the Department of Public Information shall originate, to the extent possible, in the Committee and shall be considered by the Committee;

5. *Requests* the Department of Public Information, following the priorities laid down by the General Assembly in its resolution 65/244 of 24 December 2010, and recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration[4] and the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[5] to pay particular attention to peace and security, development and human rights and to major issues such as the eradication of poverty, including the global food crisis, conflict prevention, sustainable development, the HIV/AIDS epidemic, combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and the needs of the African continent;

6. *Requests* the Department of Public Information and its network of United Nations information centres to pay particular attention to progress in implementing the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and the outcomes of the major related United Nations summits and conferences in carrying out its activities, and calls upon the Department to play an active role in raising public awareness of the world financial and economic crisis and its impact on development, including the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and of the global challenge of climate change, in particular the actions taken within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[6] especially in the context of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, particularly in the context of the Conference of the Parties and of the Meetings of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol;[7]

## II
## General activities of the Department of Public Information

7. *Takes note* of the reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information;[8]

8. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to maintain its commitment to a culture of evaluation and to continue to evaluate its products and activities with the objective of enhancing their effectiveness, and to continue to cooperate and coordinate with Member States and the Office of Internal Oversight Services of the Secretariat;

9. *Reaffirms* the importance of more effective coordination between the Department of Public Information and the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General, and requests the Secretary-General to ensure consistency in the messages of the Organization;

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[4] See resolution 55/2.
[5] See resolution 60/1.
[6] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.
[7] Ibid., vol. 2303, No. 30822.
[8] A/AC.198/2011/2-4.

10. *Notes* the efforts of the Department of Public Information to continue to publicize the work and decisions of the General Assembly, and requests the Department to continue to enhance its working relationship with the Office of the President of the General Assembly;

11. *Encourages* continued collaboration between the Department of Public Information and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in the promotion of culture and in the fields of education and communication, bridging the existing gap between the developed and the developing countries;

12. *Notes with appreciation* the efforts of the Department of Public Information to work at the local level with other organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to enhance the coordination of their communications activities, and reiterates its request to the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its thirty-fourth session on progress achieved in this regard and on the activities of the United Nations Communications Group;

13. *Reaffirms* that the Department of Public Information must prioritize its work programme, while respecting existing mandates and in line with regulation 5.6 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation,[9] to focus its message and better concentrate its efforts and to match its programmes with the needs of its target audiences, on the basis of improved feedback and evaluation mechanisms;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to exert all efforts to ensure that publications and other information services of the Secretariat, including the United Nations website and the United Nations News Service, contain comprehensive, balanced, objective and equitable information in all official languages about the issues before the Organization and that they maintain editorial independence, impartiality, accuracy and full consistency with resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly;

15. *Reiterates its request* to the Department of Public Information and content-providing offices of the Secretariat to ensure that United Nations publications are produced in all official languages, as well as in an environmentally friendly and cost-neutral manner, and to continue to coordinate closely with all other entities, including all other departments of the Secretariat and funds and programmes of the United Nations system, in order to avoid duplication, within their respective mandates, in the issuance of United Nations publications;

16. *Emphasizes* that the Department of Public Information should maintain and improve its activities in the areas of special interest to developing countries and, where appropriate, other countries with special needs, and that the activities of the Department should contribute to bridging the existing gap between the developing and the developed countries in the crucial field of public information and communications;

17. *Reiterates its concern* that the issuance of daily press releases has not been expanded to all official languages, through cost-neutral cooperative

[9] ST/SGB/2000/8.

arrangements with academic and other institutions, as requested in previous resolutions and in full respect of the principle of parity of all six official languages;

**Multilingualism and public information**

18. *Emphasizes* the importance of ensuring equitable treatment of all the official languages of the United Nations in all the activities of the Department of Public Information, whether based on traditional or new media, including in presentations to the Committee on Information, with the aim of eliminating the disparity between the use of English and the five other official languages;

19. *Reiterates its request* to the Secretary-General to ensure that the Department of Public Information has appropriate staffing capacity in all the official languages of the United Nations to undertake all its activities and to include this aspect in future programme budget proposals for the Department, bearing in mind the principle of parity of all six official languages, while respecting the workload in each official language;

20. *Welcomes* the ongoing efforts of the Department of Public Information to enhance multilingualism in all its activities, and stresses the importance of ensuring that the texts of all new public United Nations documents in all six official languages, information materials and all older United Nations documents are made available through the United Nations website and are accessible to Member States without delay, and further stresses the importance of fully implementing its resolution 63/306;

**Bridging the digital divide**

21. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to contribute to raising the awareness of the international community of the importance of the implementation of the outcome documents of the World Summit on the Information Society[10] and of the possibilities that the use of the Internet and other information and communications technologies can bring to societies and economies, as well as of ways to bridge the digital divide, including by commemorating World Information Society Day on 17 May;

**Network of United Nations information centres**

22. *Emphasizes* the importance of the network of United Nations information centres in enhancing the public image of the United Nations, in disseminating messages on the United Nations to local populations, especially in developing countries, bearing in mind that information in local languages has the strongest impact on local populations, and in mobilizing support for the work of the United Nations at the local level;

23. *Welcomes* the work done by the network of United Nations information centres in favour of the publication of United Nations information materials and the translation of important documents into languages other than the official languages of the United Nations, encourages the network of United Nations information centres to continue to develop web pages in local languages and the Department of Public Information to provide necessary resources and technical facilities with a

[10] See A/60/687.

view to reaching the widest possible spectrum of audiences and extending the United Nations message to all the corners of the world in order to strengthen international support for the activities of the Organization, and encourages the continuation of efforts in this regard;

24. *Stresses* the importance of rationalizing the network of United Nations information centres, and, in this regard, requests the Secretary-General to continue to make proposals in this direction, including through the redeployment of resources where necessary, and to report to the Committee on Information at its successive sessions;

25. *Reaffirms* that the rationalization of United Nations information centres must be carried out on a case-by-case basis in consultation with all concerned Member States in which existing information centres are located, the countries served by those information centres and other interested countries in the region, taking into consideration the distinctive characteristics of each region;

26. *Recognizes* that the network of United Nations information centres, especially in developing countries, should continue to enhance its impact and activities, including through strategic communications support, and calls upon the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of this approach to the Committee on Information at its successive sessions;

27. *Requests* the Department of Public Information, through the information centres, to strengthen its cooperation with all other United Nations entities at the country level and in the context of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, in order to enhance coherence in communications and to avoid duplication of work;

28. *Stresses* the importance of taking into account the special needs and requirements of developing countries in the field of information and communications technology for the effective flow of information in those countries;

29. *Also stresses* the importance of efforts to strengthen the outreach activities of the United Nations to those Member States remaining outside the network of United Nations information centres, and encourages the Secretary-General, within the context of rationalization, to extend the services of the network of United Nations information centres to those Member States;

30. *Further stresses* that the Department of Public Information should continue to review the allocation of both staff and financial resources to the United Nations information centres in developing countries, taking into account the specific needs of the least developed countries;

31. *Welcomes* the support by some Member States, including developing countries, in offering, inter alia, rent-free premises for the United Nations information centres because of lack of funding, bearing in mind that such support should not be a substitute for the full allocation of financial resources for the information centres in the context of the programme budget of the United Nations;

32. *Notes* the strengthening of the information centres in Cairo, Mexico City and Pretoria, and encourages the Secretary-General to explore the strengthening of other centres, especially in Africa, in cooperation with the Member States concerned and in a cost-neutral manner;

33. *Welcomes* General Assembly resolution 64/243 of 24 December 2009, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to establish a United Nations information centre in Luanda as a contribution towards addressing the needs of Portuguese-speaking African countries, reiterates its request to the Secretary-General, in coordination with the Government of Angola, to take the measures necessary for the prompt establishment of the information centre, and requests the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its thirty-fourth session on the progress made in this regard;

34. *Encourages* the Secretary-General, when appointing directors to the United Nations information centres, to fully consider, inter alia, the experience of candidates in the field of information and communications technology as one of the highly desirable appointment criteria;

## III
## Strategic communications services

35. *Reaffirms* the role of the strategic communications services in devising and disseminating United Nations messages by developing communications strategies, in close collaboration with the substantive departments, United Nations funds and programmes and the specialized agencies, in full compliance with their legislative mandates;

### Promotional campaigns

36. *Appreciates* the work of the Department of Public Information in promoting, through its campaigns, issues of importance to the international community, such as the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the progress made in implementing the internationally agreed development goals, United Nations reform, the eradication of poverty, conflict prevention, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, sustainable development, disarmament, decolonization, human rights, including the rights of women and children, persons with disabilities and migrant workers, strategic coordination in humanitarian relief, especially in natural disasters and other crises, HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, non-communicable diseases and other diseases, the needs of the African continent, the nature of the critical economic and social situation in Africa and the priorities of the New Partnership for Africa's Development,[11] the special needs of the least developed countries, the establishment of the permanent memorial to the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, dialogue among civilizations, the culture of peace and tolerance and the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster, as well as prevention of genocide, and requests the Department, in cooperation with the countries concerned and with the relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, to continue to take appropriate measures to enhance world public awareness on all these issues;

37. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to contribute to the observance of International Mother Language Day on 21 February, as proclaimed by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade on 25 March, in accordance with General Assembly

[11] A/57/304, annex.

resolution 62/122 of 17 December 2007; and Nelson Mandela International Day on 18 July, in accordance with Assembly resolution 64/13 of 10 November 2009, and to play a role in raising awareness and promoting these events in a cost-neutral manner, where appropriate;

38. *Commends* the role of the Secretariat, especially the Department of Public Information, in holding the first official ceremony commemorating the International Day of Nowruz, on 21 March 2011, organized jointly by all the sponsors of General Assembly resolution 64/253 of 23 February 2010;

39. *Requests* the Department of Public Information and its network of United Nations information centres to take appropriate measures to raise awareness of and disseminate information on the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development to be held in 2012, and relevant sustainable development issues;

40. *Also requests* the Department of Public Information and its network of United Nations information centres to raise awareness and disseminate information, in a cost-neutral manner, on the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, declared by the General Assembly in its resolution 65/119 of 10 December 2010;

**Role of the Department of Public Information in United Nations peacekeeping operations**

41. *Requests* the Secretariat to continue to ensure the involvement of the Department of Public Information from the planning stage of future peacekeeping operations through interdepartmental consultations and coordination with other departments of the Secretariat, in particular with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support;

42. *Requests* the Department of Public Information, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support to continue their cooperation in raising awareness of the new realities, far-reaching successes and challenges faced by peacekeeping operations, especially multidimensional and complex ones, and the recent surge in United Nations peacekeeping activities, and welcomes efforts by the three Departments to develop and implement a comprehensive communications strategy on current challenges facing United Nations peacekeeping;

43. *Stresses* the importance of enhancing the public information capacity of the Department of Public Information in the field of peacekeeping operations and its role, in close cooperation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support, in the process of selecting public information staff for United Nations peacekeeping operations or missions and, in this regard, invites the Department of Public Information to second public information staff who have the skills necessary to fulfil the tasks of the operations or missions, taking into account the principle of equitable geographical distribution in accordance with Chapter XV, Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, and to consider views expressed, especially by host countries, when appropriate, in this regard;

44. *Emphasizes* the importance of the peacekeeping gateway on the United Nations website, and requests the Department of Public Information to continue its efforts in supporting the peacekeeping missions to further develop their websites;

45. *Requests* the Department of Public Information and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to continue to cooperate in implementing an effective outreach programme to explain the zero-tolerance policy of the Organization regarding sexual exploitation and abuse and to inform the public of the outcome of all such cases involving peacekeeping personnel, including cases where allegations are ultimately found to be legally unproven, and also to inform the public of the adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations Comprehensive Strategy on Assistance and Support to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by United Nations Staff and Related Personnel;[12]

**Role of the Department of Public Information in strengthening dialogue among civilizations and the culture of peace as means of enhancing understanding among nations**

46. *Recalls* its resolutions on dialogue among civilizations and the culture of peace,[13] and requests the Department of Public Information, while ensuring the pertinence and relevance of subjects for promotional campaigns under this issue, to continue to provide the support necessary for the dissemination of information pertaining to dialogue among civilizations and the culture of peace, as well as the initiative on the Alliance of Civilizations, and to take due steps in fostering the culture of dialogue among civilizations and promoting cultural understanding, tolerance, respect for and freedom of religion or belief and effective enjoyment by all of all human rights and civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development;

47. *Invites* the United Nations system, especially the Department of Public Information, to continue to encourage and facilitate dialogue among civilizations and to formulate ways and means to promote dialogue among civilizations in the activities of the United Nations in various fields, taking into account the Programme of Action of the Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations,[14] and, in this regard, looks forward to the report of the Secretary-General requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 60/4 of 20 October 2005, and also welcomes the decision of the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session to hold an informal thematic debate on this issue in 2010;

48. *Recognizes* the achievements of the Alliance of Civilizations and the efforts made by the High Representative of the Secretary-General for the Alliance of Civilizations, which it had welcomed in its resolution 64/14 of 10 November 2009, takes note of the broad range of initiatives and partnerships in the areas of youth, education, the media and migration to be launched at the fourth Alliance of Civilizations Forum, to be held in Doha in December 2011, and welcomes the continuing support of the Department of Public Information for the work of the Alliance of Civilizations, including its ongoing projects;

## IV
## News services

49. *Stresses* that the central objective of the news services implemented by the Department of Public Information is the timely delivery of accurate, objective

[12] Resolution 62/214, annex.
[13] Resolutions 52/15, 53/22, 53/25, 55/23, 56/6, 59/142 and 60/4.
[14] Resolution 56/6, sect. B.

and balanced news and information emanating from the United Nations system in all four mass media, namely, print, radio, television and the Internet, to the media and other audiences worldwide, with the overall emphasis on multilingualism, and reiterates its request to the Department to ensure that all news-breaking stories and news alerts are accurate, impartial and free of bias;

50. *Emphasizes* the importance of the Department of Public Information continuing to draw the attention of world media to stories that do not obtain prominent coverage, through the initiative entitled "10 Stories the World Should Hear More About" and through video and audio coverage by United Nations Television and United Nations Radio;

**Traditional means of communication**

51. *Welcomes* the continuing initiative of United Nations Radio, which remains one of the most effective and far-reaching traditional media available to the Department of Public Information and an important instrument in United Nations activities, to enhance its live radio broadcasting service by making more frequently updated reports in all six official languages and features available to broadcasters on a daily basis on all United Nations activities, and requests the Secretary-General to continue to make every effort to achieve parity in the six official languages in United Nations Radio productions;

52. *Also welcomes* the ongoing efforts being made by the Department of Public Information to disseminate programmes directly to broadcasting stations all over the world in the six official languages, with the addition of Portuguese and Kiswahili, as well as in other languages where possible;

53. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to continue building partnerships with local, national and regional broadcasters to extend the United Nations message to all the corners of the world in an accurate and impartial way, and requests the Radio and Television Service of the Department to continue to take full advantage of the technological infrastructure made available in recent years;

**United Nations website**

54. *Reaffirms* that the United Nations website is an essential tool for the media, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, Member States and the general public and, in this regard, reiterates the continued need for strengthened efforts by the Department of Public Information to maintain and improve it;

55. *Recognizes* the efforts made by the Department of Public Information to implement the basic accessibility requirements for persons with disabilities to access the United Nations website, and calls upon the Department to continue to work towards compliance with accessibility requirements on all new and updated pages of the website, with the aim of ensuring its accessibility for persons with different kinds of disabilities;

56. *Notes* that the multilingual development and enrichment of the United Nations website has improved,[15] and, in this regard, requests the Department of Public Information, in coordination with content-providing offices, to further improve the actions taken to achieve full parity among the six official languages on

[15] See A/AC.198/2007/3.

the United Nations website, and especially reiterates its request to the Secretary-General to ensure the adequate distribution of financial and human resources within the Department allocated to the United Nations website among all official languages, taking into consideration the specificity of each official language;

57. *Recognizes* the cooperative arrangements undertaken by the Department of Public Information with academic institutions to increase the number of web pages available in some official languages, and reiterates its urgent request to the Secretary-General to extend those arrangements to all the official languages of the United Nations;

58. *Reiterates its request* that all content-providing offices in the Secretariat translate all English-language materials and databases posted on the United Nations website into all other official languages and make them available on the respective language websites in the most practical, efficient and cost-effective manner;

59. *Reaffirms* the need to enhance the technological infrastructure of the Department of Public Information on a continuous basis in order to widen the outreach of the Department and to continue to improve the United Nations website in a cost-neutral manner;

60. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to take full advantage of new developments in information technology in order to improve the expeditious dissemination of information on the United Nations in a cost-neutral manner, in accordance with the priorities established by the General Assembly in its resolutions and taking into account the linguistic diversity of the Organization, recognizes the e-mail news alerts service, and encourages the Department to consult with the Office of Information and Communications Technology in order to explore, as a matter of priority, the provision of the service in all official languages;

61. *Recognizes* that some official languages use non-Latin and bidirectional scripts and that technological infrastructures and supportive applications in the United Nations are based on Latin script, which leads to difficulties in processing non-Latin and bidirectional scripts, and urges the Office of Information and Communications Technology to further collaborate with the Department of Public Information and to continue its efforts to ensure that technological infrastructures and supportive applications in the United Nations fully support Latin, non-Latin and bidirectional scripts in order to enhance the equality of all official languages on the United Nations website;

62. *Calls upon* the Department of Public Information, recognizing the importance of audio-visual archives and the actions taken by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library to preserve the published record of the Organization as a common heritage, welcoming the completion of an inventory of sixty-five years of United Nations audio-visual history, stressing the urgency of digitization in order to prevent further deterioration of the unique historical archives, and taking note of efforts made by the Department thus far to develop a digitization strategy in consultation with other Departments, including the Office of Information and Communications Technology, to explore avenues of support for digitization, including working with interested partners, to ensure that such archives are preserved and are accessible;

## V
## Library services

63. *Calls upon* the Department of Public Information to continue to lead the Steering Committee for the Modernization and Integrated Management of United Nations Libraries, and further commends the steps taken by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and the other member libraries of the Steering Committee to align their activities, services and outputs more closely with the goals, objectives and operational priorities of the Organization;

64. *Reiterates* the need to maintain a multilingual collection of books, periodicals and other materials in hard copy, accessible to Member States, ensuring that the Library continues to be a broadly accessible resource for information about the United Nations and its activities;

65. *Calls upon* the Department of Public Information, recognizing the importance of audio-visual archives in preserving our common heritage, to continue to examine its policies and activities regarding the durable preservation of its radio, television, film and photographic archives and the action taken in ensuring that the archives are preserved and are accessible, including in the context of the construction work of the capital master plan within the overall budget of the plan;

66. *Notes* the initiative taken by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, in its capacity as the focal point, to expand the scope of the regional training and knowledge-sharing workshops organized for the depository libraries in developing countries to include outreach in their activities;

67. *Acknowledges* the role of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library in enhancing knowledge-sharing and networking activities to ensure access to the vast store of United Nations knowledge for delegates, permanent missions of Member States, the Secretariat, researchers and depository libraries worldwide;

## VI
## Outreach services

68. *Also acknowledges* that the outreach services provided by the Department of Public Information continue to work towards promoting awareness of the role and work of the United Nations;

69. *Welcomes* the educational outreach activities of the Department of Public Information, through the United Nations Works programme and the Global Teaching and Learning Project, to reach educators and young people worldwide via a range of multimedia platforms, and encourages the United Nations Works programme to continue to develop further its partnerships with global media networks and celebrity advocates and the Global Teaching and Learning Project to further expand its activities to teachers and students in primary, intermediate and secondary schools;

70. *Notes* the launch of the United Nations Academic Impact, an initiative that aims to facilitate exchanges between the United Nations and institutions of higher education and to support the common principles and goals of the Organization;

71. *Also notes* the importance of the continued implementation by the Department of Public Information of the ongoing programme for broadcasters and

journalists from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, as mandated by the General Assembly, and requests the Department to consider how best to maximize the benefits derived from the programme by extending, inter alia, its duration and the number of its participants;

72. *Welcomes* the movement towards educational outreach and the orientation of the *UN Chronicle*, both print and online editions, and, to this end, encourages the *UN Chronicle* to continue to develop co-publishing partnerships, collaborative educational activities and events with civil society organizations and institutions of higher learning;

73. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to continue the publication of the *UN Chronicle* with a view to improving it further in a cost-neutral manner and to report to the Committee on Information at its thirty-fourth session on progress in this matter, and reiterates its request to submit options for publishing the *UN Chronicle* in all six official languages;

74. *Notes* the efforts undertaken by the Department of Public Information in organizing exhibitions on important United Nations-related issues, within existing mandates, at United Nations Headquarters and at other United Nations offices as a useful tool for reaching out to the general public, reaffirms the important role that guided tours play as a means of reaching out to the general public, and requests the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to ensure that the guided tours provided at United Nations Headquarters and other United Nations duty stations are consistently available, in accordance with their income-generating nature, in particular in all the United Nations official languages;

75. *Also notes* the ongoing efforts of the Department of Public Information to strengthen its role as a focal point for two-way interaction with civil society relating to the priorities and concerns of the Organization identified by Member States;

76. *Commends*, in a spirit of cooperation, the United Nations Correspondents Association for its ongoing activities and for its Dag Hammarskjöld Memorial Scholarship Fund, which sponsors journalists from developing countries to come to United Nations Headquarters and report on the activities during the General Assembly, and further encourages the international community to continue its financial support for the Fund;

77. *Expresses its appreciation* for the efforts and contribution of United Nations Messengers of Peace, Goodwill Ambassadors and other advocates to promote the work of the United Nations and to enhance international public awareness of its priorities and concerns, and calls upon the Department of Public Information to continue to involve them in its communications and media strategies and outreach activities;

## VII
## Final remarks

78. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its thirty-fourth session and to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session on the activities of the Department of Public Information and on the implementation of all recommendations and requests contained in the present resolution;

79. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to make every effort to ensure that the level of services provided by the Department of Public Information is maintained throughout the period of the implementation of the capital master plan;

80. *Notes* the initiative taken by the Department of Public Information, in cooperation with the Department of Safety and Security and the Protocol and Liaison Service, during the general debate of the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, to issue special identification stickers to press officers of Member States to enable them to escort media covering the visits of high-level officials to restricted areas, and strongly urges the Secretary-General to continue to improve this practice by acceding to the request by Member States to provide the needed number of additional passes to press officers of Member States to allow their access to all areas that are deemed restricted, in order to effectively and comprehensively report on high-level meetings that include officials of delegations of Member States;

81. *Requests* the Committee on Information to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session;

82. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-seventh session the item entitled "Questions relating to information".

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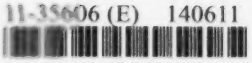

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